

PARADOX

BIGGER THAN YOUR MOTHER ... AND 11 X 17 FOR YOUR PROTECTION

Issue Number 17 The Fishies Have Come, \$1.00



Ranma 1/2 II
ANYTHING-GOES MARTIAL ARTS

At the CES, the Mystical Man ran by and dropped off this...

EDITORS WELCOME!

Well, another June has passed, as has yet another CES at the always great McCormick Place in Downtown Chicago. It was the 50th CES ever, and unfortunately, the last ever in Chicago. Next year, the show will take place in Philadelphia and will have the title CES Interactive '95. The new format of the Summer show will have on display computer hardware and software, video games, and all other items that fall under the title of interactive media. Therefore, this past CES may very well have been my last for quite a while. Somewhat depressing, but that's life, and maybe I'll get to join the faned parade at the winter show in Vegas.

As some of you know, this is my first layout adventure since issue 11/12, so bear with me. Chris has been taken captive by the professional scene and has left me the publishing job. I, therefore, will use what little power I have attained to show you the most recent Digital Output column by Chicago native James Catalano that Chris honestly did not want to print. James and I have always been friends, but this newest installment of his column is in truth, insulting and borders on the edge of being slanderous. He says that he may be hated for writing what he did, and I have to agree. James also stated in a recent letter to me that "that is what fanzines are for," but as Arnie Katz once wrote, there is a difference between opinion and slander. I am only printing the article to show you what he thinks of Arnie and of this fandom. You may become upset, but I find that to be James' objective, to shake things up. Regardless, he has a right to his opinion, whether or not you or I agree with him. I myself do not, but that's why his writing is in this fanzine, to let you see what he thinks about things. Luckily, you have the same ability to speak your mind that James does, an ability you can use to respond to his "Rants & Raves" in the form of a letter of comment or a rebuttal to be printed in the same pages that his work now fills. My only hope is that you can use your right to free speech, one I consider a luxury, in a slightly more classy manner than James chose to.

-Jason

It's nice to be back and producing for Paradox. I was finally hit by the Chicago Postal Paradox; my stuff was lost. This seems like it has happened to everybody on Paradox so far. Anyway, I'm in the process of getting a Jaguar. It seems to be the future of gaming. I've been hyping it up relentlessly at my school and now it's all abuzz among the elite gamers of my school. Everybody says they're going to get one after I show them some of the stuff that I bring to school to drool over, like the AVP previews and the Jag brochures. Tempest 2000 doesn't really get people too hyped up until I ask if they saw the commercial during T2 on ABC. They say "yes" and I say "Did you hear that music?" and they reply "yes." "Well, that's the actual music in the game." "No way!" "Yup." "Damn, that kicks ass!" I think that it sure is cool that Atari advertised during that; but you would think that they would have an ad for the system instead. What's the use of advertising a game for a system that many people don't even know exists? Not too many people buy games for systems that they don't own.

For all unacquainted with the messed up world of computer (cont. page 3)

PARADOX

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File behind Ox Riders' Digest

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Quotable Quotes SPECIAL

You're stupid . . . I mean that honestly.

--Justin

I hope you make it to your drug test.

--Jason

Arrr, Pettibone, arrr . . .

--Jason

Smile. Smile! Put your teeth together you moron!

--Justin

I swear he called me a stupid whore.

--Justin

Yeah, but only on the weekends.

--Jason

Don't make bunny ears on my hairy head, mister.

--Matthew Whitman

Because you're even funnier since you got your lobotomy.

--Justin

I will, when the phlebotomist leaves.

--Matthew Whitman

I was once the lizard king . . .

--Justin

Why do they even put those red masses of gelatin in there?

--Justin

You hold it, and I'll screw.

--Michelle Colson

Do you want Mario? How about Mario? Do you like Mario?

--Crazy Lady at Blockbuster

gaming, DOOM is the hottest thing to hit since Wolfenstein 3D or possibly SimCity. It is unbelievably realistic and awesome. You're down in dungeons that aren't just mazes like in Wolf 3D. As you walk, your gun bounces up and down, unlike the still-standing weapon in Wolfenstein. The graphics are totally unbelievable with 256 colors, but imagine it with 16.8 [million] on the Jaguar. I can't wait for it to be released. Anybody who buys Wolf 3D instead of DOOM has lost their mind - I know that DOOM is a ways off, but it is worth waiting for and is so much more impressive than Wolf 3D. Once you get DOOM it won't leave your Jaguar, you won't leave your chair and the outside world will have lost touch with you. Your family will have to buy another video game system and TV so that they can play games too - because you'll always be playing DOOM. Just a warning. Now on to the issue.

-Tim

Well this is the first time I've written in . . . in . . . well I have no idea how long, but it's been a while. I should have a few articles this issue and some RPG coverage (you know, the kind with dice). The SCES this year wasn't bad. From being targeted by the mystical man to realizing Pettibone looks like a pirate (no offense meant Sean but all you had to do was say "shiver me timbers" and it would have fit perfectly) it was quite a show. I hope you like the Ranma cover, as I write this I still have a lot of drawing to do so I'm trying to hurry. Well that about covers it for my welcome, short but sweet (maybe not sweet but definitely short), hope you like the new style now that Jason's doing layout. Until I next decide to actually write something, later.

-Justin

Welcome to the 17th issue of Paradox. I know, we've taken a long break, but I assure you, we'll keep doing issues as long as video games are popular.

The CES was really great this year. Nintendo had the best 16-bit game I've ever seen (Donkey Kong Country), and I finally got to play MKII on the SNES with blood. I was disappointed though that the Sony Playstation was not there. Here I was, looking forward to seeing an actual machine and maybe a few games, but no. The SCES this year was fun, but it didn't have the same "feel" that past shows have had. Many of the licensees didn't even have exhibit space, and since Sega wasn't on the show floor, we missed their usual 15+ new titles.

The Playstation's going to be really good - I can feel it. The Saturn, eh, it's O.K., but the 32X looks to be good too. So many systems, so many choices, it's going to be harder than ever for gamers to decide which, if any, of the new systems is the best for them. But, it will all lead to the one that has the quality games. At this point, that could be anybody. Atari has to release the games! I love the Jaguar system, but the games need to be shoved out the door.

I hope you enjoy this issue, thanks to Jason, who did the fantastic job of laying it all out. And to Justin, who did the cover. Until issue 17, it's been a great two years so far!

Anyway, enjoy the issue, and give me a buzz if you hear anything new or exciting. You have my number . . .

-Chris

The X Factor -- We have noticed that the new trend in the video game industry is to put an X in the name of new products. Here are some examples we could think of; can you find any more?

Wizards and Warriors X, Dracula X, Mega Man X, Mega Man X2, X-Kaliber 2097, Revolution X, Super FX chip, Stunt Race FX, Sega 32X system, Sega CDX system, NEC FX system, Shinobi X, Bandai BA-X system, and the Sony PSX system.

FAN FORUM

(Chris Johnston was suddenly transformed into a turtle and was therefore unable to respond to this month's letters. Jason Whitman will proudly take his place.)

B-I-E-N-I-E-K?

Dear Chris:

Thanks for yet another interesting and informative issue of *Paradox*, #16.

Sorry to hear that Jason doesn't like *VideoGames* magazine. Oh well, at least he was nice enough to spell my name right. I would like to clear up a misconception that he's perpetuating in the *Static* column, though. I don't write the *Zine Zone* column! I think I did *Fandango* twice - and I do read all the 'zines that come in - but *Zine Zone* has always been handled by Nikos, Betty or a combination of the two. Man, this is just like the whole *GEA News* thing, where somebody had a cow over Zach Meston's little bit of self-censorship and somewhere along the line the whole thing was attributed to me. Of course, there are far worse things in life than having somebody mistake Zach's writing for my own... and now that I've been named Executive Editor of VG, I do get to add my two cents into *Zine Zone* after all.

Chris Bieniek

(JW - I must say that it's good to hear from one of my favorite pros and even better to hear that you read *Paradox* #16 so closely that you saw my perpetuation of misconceptions. Unfortunately, the misconception you stated was not really one at all because I didn't mention *Zine Zone* once. Any references to your reviewing of fanzines referred to the editions of *Fandango* you did when the col-

JAG BOX

Capsule Reviews

Rayman (UbiSoft) - Side scroller with pretty cartoon-like graphics and superb character animation; similar in look and style to *World of Illusion*. Still in development; **OVERALL: 90%**

Alien vs. Predator - Amazing detail graphically, perfectly capturing the feel of the *Alien* movie series. AVP is a bit slow, but its numerous play options and perfect graphics make up for its speed. **OVERALL: 95%** (September release)

Wolfenstein 3-D - This game is really fast with smooth movement and control. A perfect PC conversion, with blood, Nazis, and improved graphics. **OVERALL: 97%** (finished product)

umn first reappeared in *VideoGames*. I don't have a problem with *Zine Zone*; it's just that I always preferred Arnie's *Fandango* to the somewhat shorter and less detailed *Fandango* that you did twice. No offense, I understand your limitations and am pleased that you still have fanzine coverage. As for not liking the new VG, that is of course a matter of opinion. And as I wrote in the *Static* column, I respect and admire Zach and yourself greatly; it's more the layout style of VG that I dislike.)

State of the Game II

Dear Chris:

A true turn in the right direction. *Paradox* #16 was wonderful. This is the kind of analysis I have been hop-

ing for in electronic gaming fandom. You are not alone in the perception of something rotten in the industry. I, for one, believe that we are indeed headed for another crash, at least on the dedicated platform front. Right now, my feelings about it are mixed. I love my SNES, Genesis, and Sega CD, and I really, really, love my Jaguar, so it would be downright depressing if game companies dumped any of them. None of these systems (except maybe the Genesis) has reached its full potential. Obviously greed is the motivating factor for game companies and we really shouldn't be surprised. They'll keep upping the ante and shoveling crap our way as long as we buy it. Perhaps a shakedown is just what we need (but please don't let it be Atari). Fewer systems, and definitely fewer loser magazines (I could live without *GamePro* and *Video Games*).

As you stated, oversaturation is definitely not the only problem. Personally, I am most concerned with the negative perception non-gamers have for video games. Education is the key. Unfortunately the traditional press and the government (a la Lieberman) already have the anti-game propaganda flowing and the only way to counter this is with our own propaganda campaign. We need to connect with non-gamers and show them our world through our eyes. We must confront the lies that are being spread. People in the press and in the government are speaking about games as if they have firsthand knowledge. Ridiculous. One newspaper article I read implied that in *Night Trap*, the player takes the role of killers. I'm not joking; it's really that bad. Video games will never be able to mature until a wider audience truly understands them. That's where we come in. I believe that our united goal should be mass education. What I wouldn't give to openly debate Senator Lieberman. (cont. across)

I think the biggest problem video games have in terms of mass acceptance is not the violence issue. Rather, it's the video game format itself. We gamers make certain assumptions and accept certain concepts when we play. If you're playing an RPG from Japan, you accept the fact that all the characters look stubby and childlike. If you're playing a shooter, you already understand the concept of power-ups and bosses. If you're playing *Mortal Kombat*, it doesn't bother you that the characters look like they've got poles up their butts. Now, picture a person new to gaming looking at these games. They've heard the buzzwords (Multimedia and Interactive Movie) and they are expecting to play games that look and act just like their favorite sitcom. Upon seeing standard 16-bit graphics, their suspension of disbelief is totally shattered. The reason kids can so easily get involved in electronic gaming is because they are more accepting of things that don't necessarily look like television. Even FMV games alienate newcomers because the control is so demanding. Have you ever seen a non-gamer try to play *Dragon's Lair* or *Double Switch*? Forget it. The concept is just too abstract.

I feel a point needs to be made concerning the "Nothing is as fast as *Sonic*" debate. I wonder just how important speed is in a game. You state that *Super Metroid* isn't as fast as *Sonic*. Of that, I'm sure you're correct. But does *Super Metroid* need to be as fast as *Sonic*? For that matter, does any game? Somehow I don't think the speed of the character accurately reflects the quality of the game. Personally, I've never really been too thrilled with the *Sonic* games, but then I'm sure I'm in the minority. The point is, both systems can have fast sprites, both systems can have slowdown, and both systems can have shredding. Actually, *Sonic* and *Super Metroid* a bit of each.

Since everyone else is saying it, I may as well, too. *Tempest 2000* is one of the best games I've had the pleasure of playing in a long, long time. Being a fan

of the original, I was thrilled to see a perfect translation with enhanced gameplay. If Atari can keep the quality level this high for the majority of Jag titles, they might just have a winner. One can only hope. I must say, level 62 is a real toughie.

Greg Bemis

(JW - With letters as good as yours, Greg, we almost don't need articles. I must strongly agree with one point you made about the government and the press; much of what they are feeding the public about video games are nothing more than lies. I would hope that those who are supposed to look out for us would at least be honest, but that is obviously not the case.)

*As for the speed in video games issue, I agree that it is a complete joke. I personally find it almost impossible to compare *Sonic* and *Super Metroid*; they are so different style-wise that it seems absurd to even bother. If you want an extreme example of a gaming speed freak, there was a guy at the CES that was grading different versions of *DOOM* based on their speed (in miles per hour, no less!).*

Thanks for the letter Greg. You did exactly what we wanted every reader to do with issue 16: read, think, and respond. Don't worry about our issue fees; with that letter you earned yourself a lifetime subscription. Sorry about not including Leonard Herman's address with the plug for his book. I'm unsure if the finished version contains a bibliography, but the preliminary version I received did not.)

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The Rain in Spain?

Dear Paradox,

In ish # 16 I read about the state of the game. I agree with almost every-

thing that was said. I used to know what systems were soon to come out for what company. Now I don't believe the companies when they say that they have a new system in development until they have pictures and plenty of licensees supporting it.

If I was in charge of, say, Nintendo, I'd do this, the opposite of how the company is doing it. I'd only release the information of a new system coming only after it is finished, has plenty of games ready for it, and found a way to sell it at a reasonable price so middle class gamers could get it (and the games for it would be in the \$30 to \$50 range). Then you announce this system will come out in 6 months. You have pictures and games. How could you not believe it? But during this whole time, Sega gets left in the dust for a while. They would have to resort to the bad tactics Nintendo is currently doing just to try to stay alive. By rushing, it would never reach its full potential and probably be more expensive. My system is better, cheaper, and has a larger selection of games. You'd blow away the competition. This is what needs to be done. Don't announce vaporware. Announce a finished product.

On Sega's rating system, what I think they should have done is released one *Mortal Kombat* rated MA-13 without the code for the fatalities and one rated MA-17 with the fatalities and blood already in without the codes. That way you avoid censorship (which I abhor) but parents get the proper rating. Those who want to see blood, (like the editor of TCPCVGNAWS) can.

Tim Spain

(JW - Your ideas aren't bad, Tim, but what you need to realize is that while you were designing and manufacturing this super system, Sega would be pumping out press releases that describe a system they're developing that is even more powerful. You see, press releases aren't intended to be lies exactly; they're just attempts by a given company to retain their base audience and not lose them to a company with something that is supposedly so much more powerful.)

Import Paranoia

by Jason Whitman

Why are American video game developers afraid of great Japanese games? The reason always expressed to the American gaming public is that these games, though great, have Japanese humor or types of things that gamers here just wouldn't like. One thing that all of these games do possess, however, is great gameplay, something every gamer, American or Japanese, craves. I have seen some of the best games ever created left overseas because there was no U.S. counterpart to distribute it here or because the parent company decided not to release it due to one of the reasons mentioned above. I have also seen a respectable system in the TurboGrafx-16 die because its parent company was unwilling to release Japanese hits here in the states.

NEC Avenue and Hudson Soft in all truth buried the TurboGrafx-16 when they left the best games available for the system in Japan. Titles like Dracula X, Flash Hiders, and the follow-ups to the epic Cosmic Fantasy 2 would have given the Turbo the legs it needed to stand here in the U.S. Instead, we were forced to struggle through mediocre titles that often never saw the light of day in Japan and were released here exclusively. There were huge waiting lists at every mail order game service and import game store for Dracula X. In fact, when I tried to purchase it myself, I was told that it would be a virtual impossibility to get it in any reasonable amount of time. That is the one game that could have saved the Turbo. Instead, TTI is dead along with its system, a machine that will live with equally dead Atari Lynxes in closets everywhere. While Japanese gamers play Street Fighter II Dash, Cosmic Fantasy IV, all of the great Neo-Geo fighting games, and of course, the best version of Castlevania ever (on CD,

no less), my Turbo sits dormant in the closet. I'm probably one of the louder Street Fighter and fighting game haters around, but I would have liked to see some of the hot Japanese fighting games released simply to see the Turbo live up to its full potential. Instead, the death of the Turbo remains as the best example of import paranoia causing havoc within a company and causing its eventual downfall in recent history.

Other great titles that never have or will see the light of day here in the U.S. because they are just too "Japanese" include Parodius (PC Engine and Super Famicom), Dragon Ball Z 1 and 2 (Super Famicom), the original Ranma 1/2 (Super Famicom, PC Engine

"If they [Capcom] and other companies alike continue to feed us mediocrity while there is reachable greatness in Japan, we're going to spit it back in their faces."

CD), Popfulmail (Sega CD), some of the Final Fantasy games (Super Famicom), and a title that looks to be one of the best and most exciting adventure games ever, Monster World IV for the Mega Drive. These games will forever exist only in the hands of Japanese players and those of us who are willing to dish out the big bucks to buy the import from Die Hard or some other mail order house. I've done it once and have been tempted often to do it again, but the cost is great and it bothers me greatly. As if gamers here, those of us who are craving for a great shooter or RPG because the market has almost made such games extinct wouldn't want the epic Final Fantasy games or cool shooters like Parodius or Cotton to make it to the states. We want these games; we need these games. If I see another Street Fighter game for the SNES I'm going to

put my foot through my system. I would rather pop Parodius or Dragon Ball Z into my SNES than more of Capcom's rehash. It's obvious that American companies would rather just feed us the same old garbage we've been playing for the past two years rather than getting us some real games. Thanks, but Super Street Fighter is not for me.

The few companies that do have the guts to bring us the games from overseas are few and far between but do exist. Working Designs made Sega CD owners cry with Lunar: The Silver Star and will again with Vay. Toho, although they did not do any real programming themselves, released the outstanding shooter Space Megaforce (SNES) and will be translating and porting over Ranma 1/2 Super Battle (Ranma 1/2 II here for the SNES). I have always admired Working Designs for being willing to translate their cinematic adventures for the U.S. market. These are the companies that so often get overlooked in favor of manufacturers like Capcom. While Capcom makes another Street Fighter game for me to dislike, Working Designs and other companies like them are fighting to get their good games on your systems. They are attempting to cater to the needs of gamers, to spice up the market and give us something new and exciting to play. I blew up at Capcom in Paradox #13 ("Burn, Capcom, Burn"), and my opinion of them holds true. If they and other companies alike continue to feed us mediocrity while there is reachable greatness in Japan, we're going to spit it back in their faces. We can handle Japanese art, graphics, and humor. Period.



CLASSIC GAMER'S HEAVEN FOUND IN CHICAGO

Are you looking for a "new" game for your classic system? Well then, check out Windy City Game Exchange in Chicago at 3900 N. Cicero.

I recently found out about this gem of a store from a co-worker at my job who is also into gaming. While talking to him, I was musing that I wish I could still buy games for my Atari 2600. He then told me about Windy City Game Exchange. Thinking this can't be true, like what store sells 2600 games today, I had to check this out for myself.

Besides hundreds of 2600 games, this store has games for other classic systems like the Atari 5200 and 7800, Intellivision, and Colecovision. In addition to the games, various accessories can be found for the classic systems as well, like the driving module and roller controller for the Colecovision.

Along with the classics, Windy City also sells games, and lots of them, for modern obscure systems like the TurboGrafx 16, Sega Master System, and Atari Lynx.

And while this store is a classic gamer's paradise, games for the NES, SNES, Genesis, Sega CD, Game Boy, and Game Gear can be found as well.

The only bad thing I can say about Windy City Game Exchange is that some of the classic games can be a bit pricey, like a few 2600 games selling for \$10. Then again, the guy who runs this place shops the garage sales and flea markets so you don't have to.

Since this edition of Digital Output is a bit short, I think I'll air off some of my...

RANTS & RAVES

The best coin-op of the year HAS to be Namco's Ridge Racers. Forget NBA Jam: Tournament Edition! Ridge Racers is awesome, awesome, awesome!! I hope this baby comes to the Jag!

Of all the new gun games coming out, Midway's Revolution-X blows them ALL away. Like Ridge Racers, I can't wait for the home version. I'm sure, and don't you know it, Nintendo will remove (most likely) or cover up the women dancing in the cages. Yes Nintendo, we can't have young little boys getting a hard-on from watching a woman shake her butt. Grow up Nintendo! Most kids these days are having sex at eleven or twelve, but that's another subject.

As for you @\$\$holes who keep ripping on Barkley: Shut Up and Jam!, it IS better than NBA Jam! For fans of this GREAT cart, here are the final tournament championship codes for each city against Phoenix:

Brooklyn: 9TBC ?28M

Chicago: XFBC ?20W

Houston: 7RBC ?28H

Miami: 5PBC ?28C

(codes cont. across)

Oakland: ZHBC ?200

Seattle: 3MBC ?208

Watts: 1KBC ?204

On the talk of another video game crash, I welcome one! There IS just TOO MUCH hardware and software coming out today. Jason Whitman sums this up perfectly in issue 16 of Paradox. If there is a crash, I hope it kills any future interest in video games from any company. Today's games are no longer fun. One good thing about a crash is all the software that will be going in close-out and bargain bins. I can see it, Super Metroid for only \$10! And new! FuncoLand will be a winner in a crash for sure. If there is one company that must survive a crash, I hope it will be Atari. Why even look at any of the new 32-bit systems coming out when the 64-bit Jaguar is around. Being 64-bit, the Jaguar should be the standard and only system for years to come.

I know I will be hated for this but I will say it anyway. THANK GOD THERE WILL BE NO MORE OF ARNIE KATZ'S FANDOM CENTRAL!!! All this "Arnie-bashing" has done it's work! Fandom will go on without Arnie, and for the better. I found his bias coverage of the same handful of 'zines every month to be boring anyway. While others may cry, you will not be missed by me pussy Katz!

As for the soon-to-be-out EGM2? NOT! Now we really NEED a crash in the video game magazines! All I see are mags with the same old crap in them. The only decent mag around is Electronic Games.

Time to unplug! I'm outta here...

Free Speech = Libel = Slander?

Quick-shot commentary by Jason Whitman

Speech, Freedom of: freedom of expression, both oral and written, from governmental restraint, except as such expression constitutes libel, slander, obscenity, sedition, or criminal conduct such as bribery, perjury, or incitement to riot.

Libel: A written statement or graphic representation, especially in published form, that damages a person's reputation.

Slander: An oral statement of a false, malicious, or defamatory nature, tending to damage another's reputation, means of livelihood, etc.

When does personal opinion cross the line and become libel? Does libel include general name-calling that refers to no specific person, or does it only include specific personal attacks? Do the common obscenities used in our culture everyday, when used in a specific and printed form, constitute libel? And even more vital: just **who** possesses the ultimate power or divine right to decide?

A-HA! And you thought I wouldn't do fanzine reviews anymore. Shame on you! This is Fandom Vortex, the section where I go off on various

fanzines I've received over the past weeks. And, of course, I get to review a prozine as well. All done in the comfort of my own . . . home. On with the reviews!



FANZINE
OF
THE
MONTH:

PROZINE REVIEW: GAMEFAN, Vol. 2, Issue 8, \$4.95

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Suite 210

Agoura Hills, CA 91301

I've been a subscriber to GameFan since their first issue, and I've enjoyed them all. GameFan is still my favorite magazine when it comes to screen shots and letters. I like the attitude they take - "We're gamers, we play games, we talk to game companies, and we publish a mag about games."

This time, the cover was missing something. I didn't like the 4/5 artwork. I would have rather seen a full-page masterpiece like those seen on previous covers (Cool Spot, Earthworm Jim, etc.). I like Dave Halverson's editorial, it's always been an insightful essay into a topic of his choosing. GameFan seems to really be in touch with the issues that plague gaming today (FMV, licensing, trade shows, originality, new systems, etc.).

But, in this particular issue, it seems to me they made a few mistakes in the "Viewpoint" section. SSFII got a 90, 94, 96, while Powers Kingdom on the 3DO got a 98, 92, and 96. It would seem to me that, averaged out, Powers Kingdom should be the game of the month, not SSFII. It's got 95 (avg.), SSFII got 93 (avg.). Is this sucking up to Capcom? I think so . . . just because you've got SSFII because you'll do anything for an exclusive doesn't mean you should be unfair to other games.

In this issue, they seemed to be excited about everything. I thought it was unusual that they had no Jaguar coverage, and the Sports section was condensed. I think that GameFan has to go back to their tried and true methods. I think that they've strayed from "honesty is our only excuse," to "whoever can give us an exclusive gets the most coverage and game of the month." There's no more honesty here, unfortunately, not even in the letters section, which used to be one of my favorites.

PROZINE TOP FIVE:

- 1.) GAMEFAN
- 2.) EGM
- 3.) GAMEPRO
- 4.) GAME PLAYER'S
- 5.) NEWTYPE GAMING

Video Zone, edited by Chris Kohler

Issue #8, \$1

330 Totoket Rd.

Northford, CT 06472

Video Zone has quickly become one of my favorite new fanzines. Why? Because Chris has done 8 issues, basically all by himself. Not only does that take dedication, but it shows that he is a true video game hobbyist.

This issue of Video Zone has a personality that is distinct. Chris does a majority of the writing, and he doesn't have a letter column yet - because he doesn't get a lot of letters (yet).

The writing in his 'zine is very good - he "talks" to you, which is something that is missing in a lot of fanzines. Unlike most fanzines I have been getting, he'll review games telling you of his experiences with the title.

It has reviews of games new and old, and tips on them as well (something I like to see, as rarely do we see old tips printed). This fanzine shows that Chris enjoys playing video games, and producing this fine fanzine.

Mike Pittaro (in Uproar, his review of VideoZone) is correct in saying that VZ doesn't have the bash-n-trash that plagues other fanzines. He leaves it to games, and that's where it should be.

If you have not seen a copy of VideoZone, I suggest that you try a copy. Furthermore, if any fanzine editors out there have not added him to your "trade" list, I suggest you do so now. Chris is going to be one fanzine editor to watch in the next year or so, his fanzine shows amazing potential. So, maybe it's not the flashiest 'zine around, but it's very good.

SLAP-DASH #1, edited by Russ Perry, \$1

5970 Scott St.

Omro, WI 54963-9413

Slap-Dash is Russ Perry's fanzine . . . So why is this so strange? Actually, I had NO idea what to expect, but this fanzine is well-edited, fun to read, and informative. Sections that were particularly outstanding were: Glitch (a news/misc. information column), Pillow Fighter (a review of a game for the Atari Jaguar, heh heh), Ideas from the Lab, and Jaguar Goes Local.

Slap-Dash is a great first effort from Russ. Everyone's been receiving his letters for so long now, it was definitely time for him to enter the ranks of fanzine publishers. Glad to have you Russ, keep it up.

UPROAR, edited by Mike Pittaro, June/July 1994, \$1.50
18 Old Coach Rd.
Hudson, NH 03051

Uproar has caught a niche, but unfortunately, it falls into a strayed path in spots throughout the issue. I enjoy the overall format of Uproar, but it lacks focus. It goes in too many directions.

I agree with his editorial, fandom was once in trouble, but has now redeemed itself. But, thinking that the trouble ended in April, this June/July issue is a bit late to speak. It ended, and that's all that needed to be said.

Another thing that wasn't exactly timely is Mike's article on the Amiga CD32. Amiga went bankrupt, and the CD32 will not be seen on store shelves again in this country, end of story. Why keep telling a dead horse to get up and race? The TG-16 article was another untimely piece.

The "In an Uproar" column was a very good idea, I'd like to see it again in a future issue.

Mike's got some great ideas here. If he can focus more, watch for article timeliness, and stop beating dead horses, then maybe Uproar will benefit. Overall, I like Uproar, but there's a few things that could use tweaking.

HARDCORE - ONLY FOR THE HEADSTRONG
edited by Tyrone Rodriguez, #1, \$1.50
1122 North Berni St.
Santa Ana, CA 92703-1506

Tyrone's been a friend of mine for some time now, and I enjoyed his writing in Entry Level, which he has left. Hardcore is a different kind of 'zine that blends many things into a small space.

It looks promising from the first issue, which focuses on a wide range of topics. The WCES report is a bit old, but Tyrone's intentions at first were to get the 'zine out shortly after the show (which didn't happen).

He's got a multitude of contributors backing him up, writing about anything from music to politics, to, of course, video games.

I'm looking forward to Tyrone's next issue, but this is a pretty decent first effort. Add this one to your list to watch.

BEYOND GAMING, edited by Ryan Smith
Issue #3, March/April, \$3 color, \$2 black and white
89 Arundel Pl.
St. Louis, MO
63105

Beyond Gaming focuses heavily on reviews. Ryan piles them on,

going deep into each title, especially MKII and Viewpoint in this issue. The fanzine covers the Neo-Geo (Hi Chad!), Super NES, Genesis, and computer. It also dabbles in arcade games.

This issue includes an interview with the director of marketing at Rocket Science Games, a Wing Commander vs. X-Wing review, an editorial and more. The reviews are insightful as well.

Beyond Gaming is a good 'zine that you might want to check out. I'd like to see some more stuff before I make a final judgment, because I don't know Ryan's style yet. It is a worthwhile read.

FANTAZINE, edited by Pat Reynolds #7, \$2
1740 Millbrook SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

It's too bad that Fantazine will shortly be ending its reign of terror. This 'zine has quickly gone to the top of the list, and it has always been a lightning rod of controversy.

I enjoyed this issue because it focused in on a topic that's been on my mind - SMASHING THE MYTH OF SPEED AND POWER, the Nintendo advertorial. That advertorial has been a catalyst for a good long discussion about system loyalty, competition, and system performance.

Jess, I don't think there is such a thing as Slanderware. If Nintendo ever signs on as a Sega licensee, I'll rethink that, but if it costs money for Konami to make a Genesis game, I think they're going to try to make a decent effort. But, oh well. Anime, a great Ranma 1/2 Super Battle guide, an article about Working Designs, and loads of fanzine reviews (well-written, I might add), make a picture good enough to frame.

It's hard to say what fandom will be like without Fantazine's presence. I'm sure that if it sticks around long enough for some of the EGM2 readers to see it, then we'll see someone come up from the darkness and take his place. Until that time, it's still one of the greats. And if Pat hasn't reached BNF status yet, he has now, and I'm sure a lot of people agree with me.

MEDIAPOINT, edited by Nathan Palmer
July 1994, #3, FREE
1306 S. 2500 W.
Syracuse, UT 84075-6942

Mediapoint is also a relatively new fanzine. It has a

nice looking layout, and well-written, informative articles. It delves into video games and computers, but it flows well.

(continued on next page)



(fanzine reviews cont.)

Most of the issue is dedicated to next generation systems, a topic which is very important to me. It talks about the systems and Nathan makes a few predictions in the issue.

The pseudonyms are fine, but I'd rather see them use their real names. Mediapoint is a sincere 'zine, and the pseudonyms don't fit somehow.

Mediapoint has great ideas, it's a fanzine based on editorials. This is something I really like to see, and I read 'zines like this a lot. More than once, usually.

If you send in a request, you won't be paying for anything, so you can't lose by getting an issue of this 'zine. It's informative reading, and you'll enjoy the insights.

IN BETWEEN THE LINES

edited by Sean Pettibone, #5, \$1.00
2406 Red Maple Ct.
Troy, MI 48098

We certainly had to wait a while for the newest issue of IBTL, but I for one am willing to wait as long as necessary to receive this outstanding fanzine.

As always, Sean includes a great editor's welcome that comments on some humorous incident or strange occurrence that his honesty most likely provoked. This issue, Sean comments on the response of Sunsoft's Justin Siller to the less than favorable review of Aero the Acrobat in IBTL #4.

Also included in IBTL #5 is a Winter CES report titled "Viva Las Vegas" (obviously not your typical CES report) and the straight to the point game reviews found in previous issues. This issue also has great cover art by Chad Sliwinski, just one of IBTL's many talented contributors.

There isn't a whole lot one can say about In Between the Lines. With its biting humor, casual attitude, and great writing, it is one of the best 'zines around. For a good laugh and an outstanding fanzine, send Sean a dollar.

—review by Jason Whitman

The Grand
Return of
Tim
Johnson
in:

ADRENALINE
May your hearts be unbending in the
path of courage and justice

Computers have their purpose and video games have theirs. Computers were meant to do equations - which they do - but the original intent was not so that people could be playing games.

The main idea of video game consoles were so that people could play games. Not learn about dinosaurs or look up a word. Lately the purposes have been mixed.

Computers have gradually become a more powerful force for gaming and video game companies think that it is their duty to act as digital teachers and parents.

Up until now, most average-priced home computers were more powerful than video game systems. The games for these were often much better than anything that a home system was capable of. When the C64 was released we were seeing the last of the one-game Pong systems and the introduction of the Atari 2600. Both were priced outrageously - but the C64 was much more powerful. Both became huge powerhouses, the C64 OWNING the "family computer" world and the 2600 the standard for electronic gaming. The C64 had much more advanced sound and graphic capabilities and it could also do much more than just play games. The 2600 was stuck with straight lines and blips as their graphics until the later years of its life when Pitfall 2 and other great games were released. By this time, the C64 had games with graphics nearly as good as their arcade counterparts.

Then came Nintendo. It could produce better sound and graphics than the C64, and the IBM was making its way into the scene also. The IBM was stuck with cryptic black-and-white "graphics" while the Nintendo had wonderful power. The 2600 died and Atari was out of the scene, and Nintendo was king. Sega released its system and it had greater graphics than the NES but failed. The IBM slowly updated its graphics to EGA and later VGA which supported 320x400 256-color graphics or 640x480 graphics with 16 colors. This blew away the NES. The SNES and Genesis were released with great graphics and great games, but the IBM blew them away just as the old C64 blew away the 2600. Out came SVGA!! The non-standard for IBM graphics; all computers started coming with these adapters. They support a resolution of 1024x768 with 256 colors or 1260x1024 with 16 colors! The standard for SVGA was nonresolute so games didn't support them until the VESA was established. It is a standard format for SVGA adapters, and then games used the format and, well, they simply BLOW AWAY SNES or Genesis. Now, we have the Jaguar and 3DO - but, excuse me, where are the affordable home computers to match these? All this new technology is so expensive that home computers and video game systems just can't handle it - Jaguar is the best value at \$250, but if you want a home computer that can match the abilities of that you need around \$15,000 for a SGI machine. These are fast but the graphics don't get much better than a Jag or 3DO. Arcade games also can't match the capabilities of the more elaborate home systems. Forget Neo-Geo, folks, the 64 and 32 bitters are here - some so expensive that you could get a home computer for the same price, and they can run the same kind of programs - and more. Could we see a turnaround of trends here? Companies are starting to release a lot more programs for home systems that were formerly only considered to be released on a computer, such as those talking books or other educational software. Could the "video game systems" of today and the near future take the role that computers used to play? Expensive items that can do many things other than just entertain - while software producers look more towards the computers to produce software?

Computers have their drawbacks, mind you. Keep in mind the lack of a central governing system for computers, and -- piracy. Why should someone BUY

something when you could copy it from someone else? This is a major problem in computers and the problem is growing in the video game world also. I could expand on the video game part in this article but I know that some major companies are reading this and I know some information that they don't want you to know and still some more that they would die to know - and I don't want them on my back. So let's just forget about the video game piracy bit for now.

Computers also don't have a mother to look over the people that they play with, like Nintendo's control over its systems. It says who produces software for it, and if someone produces something without consent, Nintendo has the law behind them. I could go and write a game for the computer right now, sell it, make millions, and it is totally legal. Companies on computers would be competing with people making software in their basements.

As video games and consoles get more expensive, the user base grows smaller. There are less than 500,000 people using Indies. Probably less than 100,000. Maybe less than 50,000. These are luxury items. For somebody to pay \$1000 for an entertainment console, they must be expecting a lot. If there are 15 systems competing with that one and all of them cost over \$200 then you're going to have to pick and stay with one or just leave them all behind. We're seeing the kiddie software, adult software, and game software for the \$1000 systems right now. With computers you get more of all that and then database, word processing, graphics, sound, and programming software and a heckuva lot more for the same price. Why pay \$1000 for the limited hardware when you could have it all? I agree with all the people prophesying a video game crash - I just think that it will be different. What are now video game systems will totally change purpose.

What happens to the people who have Nintendo products from the early 90's? They're screwed. The formats have all changed - and they just don't see what they like in the new systems. Maybe it's all polygon based. Maybe there's too much educational software. Maybe there is a lack of software period. They're not going to shell out \$1000 just to be with the crowd - they're gonna play the games that they enjoy. In comes the stupid "Information SuperHighway" and here they are playing Super Mario All-Stars or Sonic 3.

The people who shell out cash for the first generation superplatforms (ooh, I made a new buzzword) find out that a year later there are 10 systems with the same specs competing with them. Software starts to lack for their system and all of the systems. Cash starts to dwindle because people just can't buy all the systems - and companies go out of business. Gone. One wrong move and you're out of there. What if Nintendo's PR system (I'm still wondering if that originality stood for Public Reliance - how no matter what Nintendo releases, people will buy it) turns out to be a total BUST? If it is really a virtual-reality polygon graphics based system, its not going to make it anywhere for a while. We're still back in the electronic dark ages, playing games that make our brains get excited and our temper rising - not a serene virtual environment where we can get ourselves a cup of coffee or shoot a pterodactyl flying up above us. If I wanted a cup of coffee I'd go and get a cup of coffee, not go and pretend that I was getting one. If I wanted to go ride my bike I'd go ride my bike - not put on a set of goggles and pretend that I'm riding a bike. I think that before virtual reality becomes so real that it takes over our lives we will have wiped out the planet already. I could expand on this but this is about video games not science fiction.

Well I've gone around 4 wholly different topics in this Chris Johnston style article (that means that it takes up half the issue) so I think I'll drop it at this. If you have any comments on what I've said just remember that I'm not a psycho and if you think that I am - I'm not. If I read this over 10 times and find some branches that have abruptly ended you can be sure that I'll continue them next month. Til then, this is Tim Johnson signing off from Rambleland.

Feature Review:

Super Street Fighter II

Capcom / SNES
by Chris Johnston

Super Street Fighter II, at first glance, looks like a supreme waste of time and money. The voices and sound effects are watered down heavily, the graphics are different from the arcade, and frames of animation are missing. Plus, at first glance, there's not much difference between SF2 Turbo and Super SF2.

But, after you play it against a friend all night long, you change your mind completely. It seems that the music gets better and better, and the voices seem more distinct then before.

For the past few weeks, I have not been able to keep away from SF2 Turbo. It's a classic game, one of my favorite Super NES titles. Super is also a worthy addition to my collection.

The four new characters are just part of it. You've got Cammy (Yes!), Fei Long (Bruce Lee?), Dee Jay (cheap as hell), and T. Hawk (also devilishly cheap). The Tournament, Group, and Time Challenge options add to this game's lastability. This is one game I can't stay away from at the moment.

Capcom can make as many updates to the SF2 series as they want. It's your choice whether you'll buy it or not. But, considering that this is the benchmark of fighting games, I'm going to keep enjoying it.

Super SF2, if you're unsure, is worth the money to rent, and if you're already an SF2 fan, then buy it. I don't need to go into detail. It's cheaper than buying the arcade machine.

Trim Nose Hairs

Pet the Monkey

Make Goulash

Read PARADOX

If the Schuh Fits... A MAN AND HIS DICE

MAGIC: THE GATHERING

A review by Justin Schuh

As one of my ventures into the realm of role playing I'm going to try to explain something of the phenomenon of Magic The Gathering. Magic is a relatively easy to learn card game in which you have a deck of spells consisting of a minimum of 40 cards and play against one or more players. Cards are available at \$2.45 for 15 card booster packs (which generally contain rarer cards) and \$7.95 for 60 card starter decks (which contain more common cards). Each player uses his or her own deck and can include whatever cards that the player chooses. This allows players to tailor their decks to their own playing styles, and keeps them buying booster packs to get certain cards. This also encourages trading between players, and since many people collect Magic cards for their trading value, or as collector's cards, this presents an interesting dimension of the game outside of actual gameplay since there are also limited edition expansion sets and cards that eventually go out of print.

There are three main reasons I consider Magic The Gathering a phenomenon instead of dismissing it as a mere game. First, Magic appeared on the game market around two years ago, and has since taken up a massive share of that market, in fact the average gaming store in my area is unable to keep Magic cards in stock for more than 3 or 4 days because they sell so fast. Second, anyone I know of who has played a game has gone out and acquired a deck within a week of their first game. Third, I have seen people spend hundreds of dollars on booster packs just to get a few certain cards, and nearly have nervous break-

downs or almost attack sales clerks because they were told the store had no more Magic cards in stock, or had a limit on how many they could sell per customer.

I don't mean to give more reason for complaint from those freaks who think games turn people into mindless violent zombies, because I've never actually seen someone go through with assaulting a sales clerk, but people do really get into this game. Its like combining Tetris, chess, comic collecting, and baseball card collecting. The basics of the game are really simple but the strategy can get really intense. I'd recommend this game to anyone.

STREET FIGHTER: THE STORYTELLING GAME

A review by Justin Schuh

For those of you who role play, I'm sure you know about the massive success of the White Wolf Storyteller series. Vampire: The Masquerade, Werewolf: The Apocalypse, and Mage: The Ascension are currently some of the best and most popular role playing games out, and most White Wolf fans can't wait until the release of Wraith. The Storyteller series has a massive appeal to RPGers because of it's extreme versatility. The systems are easy to learn and tend to remove a lot of the stress on combat and dice rolls and instead place it on story and character development. If you want to play hack n' slash and roll on everything the games, to most extents, can be played that way, or you can even go entirely without dice, leaving the group free to concentrate on the story. I generally prefer to roll some things out and give automatics for others, and having that kind of freedom is what makes it such a good system. A

game can focus on combat, intrigue, strategy, espionage, or anything, depending on what the group is interested in. So with such an ideal system and a loyal following of gamers waiting for the release of Wraith, what does White Wolf instead bring out this summer? Street Fighter: The Storytelling Game.

My first reaction to this was to assume that White Wolf had sold out and would soon join Capcom in making tired rehashes of the same games. I was half expecting to see Super Vampire: The Masquerade II Turbo. But then I thought that there was potential, and they could make SF into a decent storytelling game. The idea that White Wolf proposed was to make a game for entry level role players with characters they already knew to make gaming easier and to catch their interest. Plus, they promised an improved combat system that put more focus on fighting strategy. So I decided to give it a try and, when I saw a copy of the Street Fighter Storyteller's Handbook I picked it up. My only regret is that the store I purchased it at doesn't accept returns.

The game seems like a poor attempt at combining the gothic-punk storyteller world with a cartoony Street Fighter. The improved combat system they promised is more cumbersome than the original, and makes almost no provision for weapons; plus the game doesn't fit in at all with the other Storyteller games. Its easy to play Vampire and Werewolf together but there's no way in hell you could combine Vampire and Street Fighter unless you wanted a lot of hassles. In general the game isn't really bad. On it's own its a decent game and, being one of the few RPG source books to be in full color, it really does seem to hit it's intended market of new gamers pretty well, but to me it's a pretty big let-down. I just hope this doesn't foretell the future quality of games from White Wolf.

THE BLACK HOLE

The distant, endless swirl where video game reviews reside

Stunt Race FX

Nintendo / SNES

By Chris Johnston

Stunt Race FX didn't impress me at the CES. Bad control, sluggish speed, and uninteresting effects led me to believe that this game wasn't the kind you would want for your SNES collection.

Was I wrong. Stunt Race FX is a good game, with a bit of a learning curve. The control is bad, the first few times you play it. When you learn the courses, and when you've got the L and R sharp turns mastered, the game controls rather easily, at least with the 4-wheeler. You'll be judging hairpins with split-second timing.

The graphics are fairly decent, but what do you expect from the Super FX chip? There are a few texture-maps, but not enough to make it look realistic. It looks more like Hard Drivin' than anything else.

The sound is really good. The effects go along with the on-screen music. Example - when time runs out, it makes the little wa-wa-wa-wa sound, and the music slows down gradually. The music fits each track, and it's catchy.

So how's the challenge? For a racing game, it's OK. Younger gamers will enjoy the toony graphics of the game, and they'll probably stick with the 4-wheeler as their car. More experienced gamers will appreciate the options the game presents, and the varying tracks, unlike the more expensive Virtua Racing. A track editor would have been a nice addition, as would a better 2-player setup. As is, the split screen isn't too fun.

Buy or rent? I'd say, if you're into racing games, and you like polygon graphics, then Stunt Race is a good addition to any library. If you bought Virtua, this is a good addition, as the two games are similar enough. But, if you're on a

tight budget, and didn't like Super Mario Kart, then you should maybe try renting first. Play it a few times, it's fun after you learn it.

Fatal Fury 2

PC Engine Arcade Card

by Michael Barnabee

It's Neo Geo without the Neo Geo! This is by far the perfect version of FF2 for any system and this is only 8-bit, or is it!? After playing you may wonder yourself the same thing. Everything is here! The stages are done to perfection. If you play this you would ask, what's the difference between this and the Geo? Especially on Mai's and Terry's [levels]. From the scrolling waters and waterfalls in the very backgrounds on Mai's to Mt. Rushmore on Terry's (absolutely beautiful!). So how about the sounds you ask? Perfect if not better than the Geo in some cases. An even brighter point to this - no flicker, no slowdown. So for those of you who own a Duo, what are you waiting for? It is definitely worth the money. Hopefully soon I can get Strider and tell you about that one. How exciting! Remember, the Duo may be just about extinct here in the states, but in Japan it keeps getting better and better.

NBA Showdown '94

Electronic Arts / Genesis

by Travis Scott

NBA Showdown '94 is Electronic Arts' latest Genesis version of its popular NBA basketball series. And this time around, EA has really outdone themselves by releasing a much improved basketball cart that truly simulates the sport and significantly surpasses all its predecessors in overall quality.

The most noticeable improve-

ment to this game is in its gameplay which is faster than ever before. The animation of the characters while dunking, shooting, and rebounding is also smoother and a lot more realistic.

EA has added many new features to NBA Showdown '94. Some are: a unique free throw perspective (directly behind the foul shooter), several offensive and defensive plays to call, a full season mode, all 27 NBA teams, and player hot streaks. Additional features include: stats in all categories, four different teams to customize, and a battery back-up which allows you to save your season.

Fans of this series won't be disappointed with this fourth installment which is EA's best hoops game to date and the most realistic basketball simulation available on the Genesis.

Kabuki: Quantum Fighter

HAL / NES

by Jason Whitman

Do you have twenty dollars to spare? If your answer is yes, then continue reading. If not, then you'll have to miss out on playing one of the best 8-bit games ever made.

Kabuki: Quantum Fighter is a side-scrolling action game that was released around February of 1991. At the then high retail price of \$59.99, the game was immediately ignored. The only reason I even bothered to try Quantum Fighter was because it was given all nine in issue nineteen of EGM.

I rented this cart, played it until the early morning hours, and realized just how amazing it is. K:QF has perfect graphics, great sound, cool cinematics with an awesome storyline, original power-ups (one being your hair!), and the best play control I've ever experienced in any video game. Go to Toys R' Us and buy this game right now. Twenty bucks can be spared for classic 8-bit in its finest form.

The Summer Consumer Electronics Show was, in a word, fun. For once, I played nearly all of the major titles at length. Some of them were good, some were dogs. But the SCES this year was more than just games, it was a race for system technology.

I couldn't have been more impressed with Nintendo than I am now. They took a 16-bit machine and produced what looked like a 64-bit game. It's called Donkey Kong Country, and if you haven't seen it, when you do, you'll hand your wallet over to the Big "N". What makes this game so spectacular? Graphics are the best I've ever seen on a 16-bit machine, and they're the best I've ever seen on a cartridge system, period. The sounds are great, the gameplay is awesome, and the control for this type of computer-rendered game is superb. Nintendo is back, and this game alone is almost enough to combat Sega's 32X.

The 32X is a very nice machine as well. While at the show, we were treated to demos of the games (two playable). Overall, the 32X didn't have a lot going for it, but the demos looked promising, especially Virtua Racing Deluxe. The control on VRD was very, very tight, and precise. Star Wars Arcade was nowhere near complete, maybe less than 10% at this point. Metalhead looked fairly decent, but not playable. The 32X will be released in November, at \$149.99. We asked if there's a game packed in, and the answer was no. But, the guy we spoke to said that something will be packed in to keep new 32X owners busy. He wouldn't say what it was, but I speculate it will be small, playable demos of upcoming software, maybe a CD, who knows. All the demos were running off of the Sega MARS hardware, which is the 32X development machine. There'll be 3-4 titles at launch, with more to follow quickly thereafter. We also asked if there is a possibility that there will be a redesigned Genesis with the 32X hardware built in. He said, "Yes, we're looking at that now." There was talk of Saturn, but he mentioned that Sega is looking for the

Genesis/32X system to last until at least 1996.

From this, I speculate that we'll never see the Japanese 32-bit Saturn in the U.S. If the 32X is expected to last until 1996, then we may never see the Saturn. "By that time," as Arnie Katz said in his seminar opening, "the technology will be outdated." I agree wholeheartedly with this statement. The 32X will save Sega from alienating a lot of consumers by allowing them an affordable upgrade instead of a whole new stand-alone system. The 32X looks good, but I played a very early rev of Virtua Deluxe. Sega said that the demos we were seeing would be 30% faster on the actual production 32X. If that's the case,

In Search of the Mystical Man: A Summer CES Report

by Chris Johnston

I can assure you, we're gonna be in for some great games. Star Wars Arcade sounds cool, and if it is a great translation of the arcade, I'm signed up.

As for sound, which I know was a major problem with the Genesis, he says it adds 2 more channels, which, through programming, can be made into 4. That's good, maybe we'll get decent sound now. No games from third parties were released, but Virgin's doing a basketball game called "Hoops", and Acclaim is also working on a few games... MKII? YES!

Speaking of Acclaim, Mortal Kombat II is a great game on both systems. No matter which system you own, you'll be happy with your version. I prefer the Super NES version, because I'm a stickler for sound and graphics (unless they're games I can only play on the Genesis, like Gunstar, Aladdin, Sonic,

etc.). They're great. It seemed to be finished, and all of the blood and fatalities are in.

Fighting games came back into my blood during the SCES. I've never really enjoyed the genre very much, but I did like SF2. All of the sudden, I liked a lot of the other fighting games as well. I liked Fighter's History, it's a unique game from SF2 with a few new features. OK, so maybe the controller motions are similar... so what?! I enjoyed playing the arcade version, which is where Justin and I ran into Pete Foote of Fantazine, who, after being drugged and tortured, led me to Pat Reynolds. The half hour or so I spent playing Super SF2 arcade was also enjoyable. I never thought I'd enjoy playing Super SF2 that much. But, it was free, so I guess that would be why. I enjoyed it a lot though, and I'm buying the home version, no matter what. I liked Fighter's History too, but I'm unsure as to whether I'll pick that up. Why do I like Super SF2? I've never known too much about combos, a major part of that game, because I never realize when I do them. Super SF2 tells you when you've done a combo, and that's good. Plus, the sound is good, and the four new characters will add a lot to the game.

Earth Worm Jim!!! This one is tied with other games for my game of the show. Since it wasn't complete, I can't make a judgment, but it's very good. In fact, I'm already in line for this one too. Oct. 1 is the day, and I'll be at the mall early. Dave Perry is the best 16-bit system programmer in the industry, and this game shows it. I played it a lot, but the SNES version wasn't complete yet, so I'll reserve judgment. It's very good though. Dave Perry was also kind enough to autograph my Aladdin instruction booklet, and the GameFan with EWJ on the cover. Cool!

Speaking of autographs, Jeff Minter, the programmer of Tempest 2000 on the Jaguar, was at the Atari booth, and Jason and I both got him to sign our instruction books. He was surprised that we liked the game so much. Atari was

good, but not as commanding as they should have been. They had a small booth, but what they showed was good, although none of the games were finished. Club Drive, a game I perceived from reading Die Hard Game Fan to be finished, is NOT. It's very buggy, as is Doom. AvP looked good, but it's a little slow. I'm going to pick it up though. The Jaguar CD looked good, it was running FMV demos of Star Wars, Jaws, and some other movie. It looked decent, but no games were ready. Rayman, by UBI Soft for the Jag looked very good, with great graphics and animation. Let's hope it gets finished soon and released.

Animaniacs looked good, but Konami was being petty again. For the second year in a row, I asked for a press kit, they paused, looked at my badge, and said they were out. LIARS! Look, I know you're not out, you probably have a ton of them in back. Companies make enough to give to all the major worldwide magazines, and people who went there after I did received kits. GO GET THEM! But then again, I have not bought a Konami game since I got Track and Field 2, and I may never buy another Konami game. If they can't give me a press kit, and tell me the truth, forget it, I'm not going to support them. Oh yeah, Contra Hard Corps is a Gunstar clone, and it's nowhere near as fun.

3DO didn't impress me too much. They mocked Atari and Sega by setting up a side-by-side. Yeah, right... set up DK Country next to a 3DO game and Nintendo will win, any day. If Nintendo can do stuff on 16-bit that you can't on 32, then you'll never do it. Some of the games looked good, like Way of the Warrior (choppy, choppy, and more choppy), Road Rash (looks good), and Samurai Showdown (WHOA! How'd they pull that one?). But listen, the price is too high. It's not going to sell, and Sanyo, Goldstar, AT&T and whoever else is doing a system couldn't give me a solid release date. 3DO will die soon if something isn't done.

Nintendo had Uniracers, a game that was really fun, but probably will

never make it out. It's a very simple game (race a riderless unicycle around a colorful track from a sideways perspective), but Nintendo didn't release Mario & Wario, a great game, or Kirby's Tee Shot (another fun game), so I'm not holding my breath on this one.

Super Punch Out!! was a great game. I loved the original Mike Tyson's Punch Out! for the NES, and I found this one 10 times more enjoyable. The characters fill up the entire screen, all the play control and gameplay from the NES title is spared, and the graphics are great. Nintendo has struck again. Tin Star looked good, and you can play it with the super Scope, mouse, or pad. This title, in my opinion, will get re-

"... and I may never buy another Konami game. If they can't give me a press kit, and tell me the truth, forget it, I'm not going to support them."

named, and spruced up by the time it's released. Nintendo will name it something more flashy than Tin Star, even though I think that's a great name. Stunt Race went through many name changes, including Stunt Trax, FX Trax, Stunt Trax FX, Super FX Trax, Trick Trax, Wild Trax, etc. Donkey Kong Land for the Game Boy looked very good. It's basically DK Country for Nintendo's 8-bit portable, but it looks as good as its 16-bit cousin. Who knows when it'll come out (it was maybe 15% at the time, one playable level, and the control wasn't tweaked yet). Tetris 2 I played for all of one minute. It's Columns with Tetris-like pieces, not fun or instantly addictive like the original.

Ranma's back, and he/she/it's ditched DTMC and headed for Toho. The U.S. translation is missing Story Mode, but it has great moves, and it looks like a

fun game. I played it for a while, and it's interesting, but it's a bit slow... maybe a Turbo option would help.

The Aura Interactor looked good, and felt good too. It's more virtual reality than was presented to us at the Victor Maxx booth. \$700 for crappy VR, and they say it'll be supported. Yeah, right! I don't know if it'll gain a lot of support from gamers, but it's a fun gadget to use when playing a driving, fighting, or shooting game.

The Akira game wasn't complete, and wasn't very good either. But hey, what can you expect? THQ did have an interesting device called the Catapult. It's a modem that can go cross-platform, works on any game, and it has a free access number, and a small monthly fee to use it (\$5). That's a great idea, now if it can make it out. Remember, AT&T's Edge 16 even had Sega's blessing, and it still isn't out. THQ showed a demo using NBA Jam, and it played very well, with no interruptions. You can even hook two systems directly to play on two screens. Unlike the AT&T modem, it's not a speaker phone, but who cares about that.

My impression of the SCES was good overall. Enjoyed the show, and the games were good. Capcom and Konami annoyed me a little bit. I already told you about Konami, but Capcom's another story. My buddy Jon and I wanted to try out the Super NES version of Super SF2, so we waited in the line(s) that led to it. We finally (after 10-15 minutes) got up to the controllers. YEEESS! We're finally going to be able to play it... WRONG! When we stepped up this lady behind the counter at the booth flipped a switch which turned the huge screen into a big ad for the Street fighter movie. So, we sat and watched it, hoping we'd get to play next. WRONG again, for Capcom had to play the damn "preview/ad" three times in a row. What's the deal? Are you afraid no one will see the movie and you'll lose all your money? Oh no, I'm so sorry... this is Capcom. What the heck happened to all those game stations you had at last year's show?

Other WEIRD happenings were

(continued on next page)

at lunch. Actually, lunch was fun. We went to this VIP luncheon and had some kind of fish, and lamb. It was alright, but I liked the bread and cheese better. Jason will probably tell you more about the lunch escapade.

AH! The Bomberman 2 tournament! That was also a highlight. I don't consider myself an expert Bomberman player, since I rented the game twice, and had never played it on the TG-16. But, I actually beat Jason and Justin and got to the Semi-Finals. Then I lost BIG. But I walked away with two Bomberman caps (one of which I'm wearing right now), an Inspector Gadget dart gun, a Beauty and the Beast duffle bag, and a funky fresh sweatshirt.

I guess that wraps everything up. I hope you enjoyed the article. Matthew Smith wanted it so bad . . . I guess. See y'all next year.

FOR MAN CANNOT LIVE ON TEMPEST ALONE . . .

Even more worthless Jaguar commentary that will do no good

by Jason Whitman

The Jaguar, few can deny, is currently the most powerful cartridge-based home video game system on the market. Another fact that is undeniable is that the Jaguar is completely unknown outside the world of serious gamers. Its price is just too far above the limit of the average consumer, and there is no Sonic or Mario to propel the system ahead. Forget that Tempest 2000 is possibly the best video game to be released for a home system in the last five years; such a fact is irrelevant when one realizes that this one of the very few games available for a virtually unknown system that retails for \$249.99.

Atari has never been a marketing genius, but the Jaguar has the potential to be great, regardless of what you read in EGM. For the Jaguar to do anything, the consumers need exposure to the system. I realize that production is limited, but Atari needs to get running demos of the system and its games in major retail outlets such as Toys R' Us, Wal-Mart, Target, etc. Give these stores one playstation running Tempest 2000 and Wolfenstein 3D along with a small shipment of systems at some outrageously cheap price that such stores just cannot refuse. Atari may lose money on such a deal initially, but once consumers play these games, the first shipment of

systems will sell out and the stores will request more, which is when Atari can stabilize the price per system and make their money back in volume. The biggest Jaguar doubters are those who haven't played a single game on the system, and these are the people who need the convincing, along with EGM readers, but that's a different topic and a different article.

Second, get Cybermorph out of the box. Now. The game stands on its own rather well but is too complex for a ten year old or non-gamer to fully grasp and enjoy. Put Tempest in the box, put Aliens vs. Predator in the box, anything but Cybermorph. There needs to be that initial wow factor when one opens the box and pops the pack-in game in. The best idea would be to give Rayman a new catchy title, push the character hard in all of the new Jaguar ads, and pack the game in with the system. This game is the perfect "side-scroller with pretty graphics and simple gameplay" that a pack-in game (i.e. Sonic, Mario, Bonk) should be. The only flaw to this plan is that Rayman is far from completion. Regardless, Cybermorph needs to be removed or another game needs to be packaged along with it because the current packaging configuration downright sucks. Put Tempest 2000 in the box so owners don't have to buy a game right away because Cybermorph confused and frustrated them. Tempest has the action, sights, and sounds to keep new owners interested and wowed until they can afford AVP or Wolfenstein 3D. No one should have to buy a game along with a \$250 system because the pack-in isn't exciting or good enough.

Price is another issue. The system needs to be \$199.99. I don't know if Atari can cut it, but \$250 is just above that maximum buying price for many, many people. Put it at \$200 and make a big deal about how it's \$50 cheaper. Or if that's an impossibility, leave the price alone and have Tempest or Wolfenstein 3D as a free mail-away cart. Sega and Nintendo did it with Sonic 2 and Mario All Stars, why not Atari too? If people see that they are getting one of the best games available for the system for FREE, they may be more willing to fork over the \$250.

As for the Jaguar CD, forget it, at least until the Christmas season or Spring of 1995. The only thing that will be touching the Jaguar later this year in quality will be the 32X, Donkey Kong Country, and maybe the 3DO. But if you let the consumers know that a CD drive will be available that will cost them \$200 more, they are going to be more willing to pick up a Genesis and 32X for a cool \$250 or maybe even consider giving the 3DO a try. The Jaguar cartridges can make it and compete with 32X games, so leave the Jag CD alone until next year. Let new owners feel they have gotten something really good (which they will have) before you bring out a \$200 add-on that will most likely be pressed by Atari and EGM as the "new technology that will make your Jag a powerhouse." The Jaguar is a powerhouse on its own, and it seems extremely counterproductive to release an CD peripheral before the best games on the cartridge platform are in circulation. Set the foundation first, give the initial format time to develop as you further advance the CD games and technology. Sega did this with the Sega CD, and although the result wasn't all that favorable for Sega, the plan was solid and the execution well done. The only flaw was software availability, a problem Atari is dealing with now that would only be severely compounded if the Jaguar CD is released too soon.

The Jaguar is a good system with loyal followers, but it is in all honesty a dying breed with only diehard Atari supporters keeping it alive. Atari needs to overhaul the Jag's marketing and distribution if they have hopes of keeping the species alive.

Sega's Saturn - a machine of the future. Or, so everyone thinks. The Saturn, if you've seen it, is a nice piece of technology. Some of the demos look impressive, and we've all seen the glossy pictures in the magazines. It looks very impressive, and it's got Sega's brand name on it, and Sega's Genesis is the most popular 16-bit machine in the market at this point.

But, if you think about it, there's a lot of misconception surrounding the Sega Saturn. Remember, everything you've seen in the magazines is from JAPAN! Not the U.S. or Europe. Sega is still denying to this very day that they have plans to release the Saturn in the U.S., at least until '95 or '96. In fact, all signs point to the idea that the Saturn is never coming here at all.

Sega's #1, clearly. No one can dispute this, even Nintendo admits it, and is fighting back hard after years of passive pokes. Sega would alienate a LOT of users by introducing a new hardware platform. If the Saturn is introduced cold, you've got to get developers to start on games, which means they stop doing Genesis stuff.

Bringing out the 32X makes a lot of sense. Every current Genesis owner is a potential 32X user, and therefore, it's very attractive for third parties, because the potential to sell a lot of game units is very good. Think of the 32X not as a prelude to the Saturn, but as the Saturn. If we didn't know anything of the Japanese Saturn, everyone would be in agreement that Sega's making the right moves.

Now, Nintendo is totally different. They can get away with introducing a new hardware platform, because they have nothing to lose. A majority of SNES owners are Nintendo loyalists, and they're going to remain that way. It won't make anyone mad if Nintendo introduces the Ultra. Just as long as they actually make a SNES-compatibility module, which is very likely. The alienation from NES to SNES was different. The SNES was more expensive, Sega had more games, Nintendo abandoned the 8-bit. Sega looked like the good guy. So, Sonic came along at the right moment. If they didn't have Sonic, they'd be lost, and Nintendo's got Kirby to introduce everyone to the Ultra (probably), and Sega has no mascot for either the 32X or Saturn. In fact, Sega is a one-mascot company. They're leaning on one character too much, and they'll fall. Nintendo has Kirby, Samus, Link, Mario, Wario, Donkey Kong, and StarFox, all recognizable. Sega's got Sonic, and maybe ToeJam & Earl, but they've been shut away in a closet. Let's face it - Sega kept TJ&E a secret. No hype, no advertising - they're asleep at the switch. And let's look at the horrid media blitz on Gunstar - if it wasn't for GameFan and maybe EGM, Gunstar would be an unknown, it is anyway.

Sega sucks at advertising now that I look at it. What have they got? People shouting SEGA! Who gives a crap about that? It wears off, and people go back to Nintendo. Sonic is already wearing thin - look at how Sonic 3 died a quick death. This Sonic & Knuckles thing is just more of the same, except you've got Knuckles. And who gives anything to play Knuckles? I'm sick of Sonic, and I'm sick of how Sega can continue putting out the same game 4 times and make it seem so new, so exciting, every single time. I mean, I thought that Sonic was an original game at one time, but Sega has exploited the 'hog to the point of exhaustion. And I think I'm not the only one that's noticed.

Now, if Sega expects Sonic to pull the 32X, then they're even more nuts than I suspected. It's time for a redesign, like Nintendo did between Mario 1, 2, and 3. The Mario games had something going for them that I haven't noticed until now (when I compare it to the Sonic series) - VARIETY. Mario 1 was pretty straightforward gameplay. Mario 2 twisted the basic theme, and allowed you to choose from 4 different characters. Mario 3 added the map, the "big" level, and the entire Koopa family joined in.

Sonic has never had the depth that the Mario game have had.

The Saturn is 32-bit. By the time Sega releases it, it'll be outdated. Nintendo easily has the upper hand. SEGA, listen to me, the Saturn is a mistake for this country. Stop the rumors about it by making a formal announcement that it will not be coming to this country. Forget about the Saturn . . . In 2 year's time, you can release a 128-bit system, and blow Nintendo out of the water. Until then, you're getting ready to jump off of a very tall building on a windy day. You're going to hit the sides many times before you reach the ground.

SATURN SATURATION

The destruction of public opinion by Chris Johnston

A Fighting Game Evolutionary Chart *by Jason Whitman*

Pong → Combat → Space War → Karate Champ → Street Fighter → China Warrior → Fatal Fury → SF2 → SNK Series → Mortal Kombat → MKII → ?

FANDOM'S BEEN WARPING MY BRAIN

by Chris Johnston

As I sit here writing this, I look back and see my involvement in video game fandom. I think of how I started up with Gamedude Fanzine Global, went on to The Bombardier, and now continue to write for Paradox.

It's been an interesting time in video gaming fandom. I've seen the death of cyberBeat and MindStorm, the rising of fanzines like FantaZine and Video Apocalypse (VA's now dead with FantaZine to soon follow), and survived through Arnie's 4 fandom columns in various magazines.

There are a few things which I was talking about with Jason the other night that I think are important.

As long as Paradox has been around, people keep saying to me, Paradox is YOUR 'zine, why don't you title yourself? The reason is simple. I did not start this fanzine alone. Paradox is and has always been a combination of people. Jason, Justin, and I from the beginning, and Tim from soon after. Justin did the layout on #6, Jason did #5, #11/12, and #17. We've gone and decided on column ideas, formats, and articles together. It's usually late at night. Jason and I are hammering out ideas for the next issue or debating about some prozine or the industry, and something hits us.

Whether it be stupid, cool, or has personal meaning, it's been customary for us to run with it. I know of only a few other faneds who come up with ideas like this. Let me tell you from experience, it's great fun to find something out of the blue that's totally fun to do. For example, Quotable Quotes, or Garbage Pail Faned, Neo Fan Quiz, or Bad Copy Quality. Take the entire issue #16 Explosion! issue. It's all been stormed during one of our lengthy conversations, or driving to Die Hard.

Arnie Katz has been the one to review Paradox as "edited by" all four of us. The format of a Head Staff is also something that no other video gaming fanzine has adopted for themselves. There's always an Editor in Chief and Assistants. There's no hierarchy in Paradox, we're all friends, and we play a lot of games, and we know the industry.

We've been copied in the past, and I'd like to thank all those of you who have. Two years of Paradox, and we're actually still going - as strong as ever. When I read back issues, I realize how much all of us have improved. The writing in our first few issues was sketchy, not refined enough, and didn't have ENOUGH opinion. Now as I look 1-2 issues back, I see that we've gotten a lot better.

The point of this article isn't to move you to tears. The point is that fandom is at a crossroads. People are dropping

out, joining in, and 'zines are in general are getting better. As we get ready to welcome a third generation of faneds to the ranks, remember where you started. I cannot stress the importance of adding new faneds to your trade lists. I know a few major faneds who don't, and that needs to stop. I know that I will be there to welcome all the new fans to the hobby. It's a great place, and no matter what all these Senators say about the hobby . . . it's been the best brain-warping material I've ever seen.

Why Would I Wait for Nintendo?

by Chris Johnston

Out of all the new systems scheduled to come out next year, there's one that I'm really looking forward to. It's Nintendo's Ultra 64.

Now, wait a second. Only a month or so ago, I was a Genesis junkie. What made me go south and start to become a Nintendo loyalist?

The reason is simple: Nintendo's got the power, they've shown the first two games to a select few, and the development material they've got can do amazing things. When I went to the CES and saw Donkey Kong Country, my mind was completely changed.

This game can single-handedly destroy Sega and restore faith in Nintendo. Not only that, but when Nintendo decides to release their system, I've got my money out. They can take my wallet.

Nintendo has third parties. Imagine what companies like Square, Shiny, and Capcom can do now. As long as Nintendo won't drive up prices for cartridges like they have with the Super NES, they're fine.

I can't stand this innuendo with Sega and their Saturn. I don't understand why everyone's nutball over a \$700 CD system that will probably never come out in this country. Sega's got to get their act together and decide, and they're already too late.

Just thinking about a 64-bit Metroid, Zelda, Kirby, or Mario makes me go into a seizure. I want to know what they've got under their table.

Just one issue ago, I spoke of all the promises that Nintendo has broken. I'm still mad at them for those promises, but if they deliver this, it's forgiven. If they don't, I will be mad as hell and I'll be armed in Redmond. I'll bring a few friends as well.

Justin Schuh Lobotomy Training Lesson Number One:

Let Them Eat Tape

This is the end of the issue as we know it . . .

PARADOX

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In addition, special thanks to Chris Bieniek, Tim Spain, Alan Lanoie, Chris Dyer, Sean Pettibone, Reynard Moore, and Russ Perry Jr. Contributions can be sent to either Jason or Chris at the appropriate addresses printed below and in the colophon. Money for back issues should be sent to Chris only. Letters of comment can be sent to any of the Head Staffers or contributors, but letters to be printed in the Fan Forum should be sent to Jason or Chris exclusively.

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"How long have you been doing that 'F' thing?"

A big fat two years, and all Paradox back issues are now only a dollar each. Stock up for the winter months or pick up any issues you may have missed.

Issue #1, June 1992 [Summer CES '92 cover]: The Dan MacArthur scandal, Summer CES reports, Sean Pettibone on Paradox Staff!

Issue #2, August 1992 [SFIII Disney cover]: First ever Quotable Quotes, "Now Hear This" by Sean Pettibone, CGR interview

Issue #3, September 1992 [Atari cart cover]: Classic coverage, arcade reviews

Issue #4 [Lords of the Rising Sun cover]: The Study Hall Chronicles, classic coverage

Issue #5 [Axelay cover]: 30 pages of poor printing in really big typefaces, purchase only to have the complete Paradox collection; not our best effort

Issue #6, December 1992 [Sonic and Tails Christmas cover]: Death of the TG-16, another issue that isn't really a bright spot; only if you feel really generous or insane

Issue #7/8, Jan./Feb. 1993 [Semi-Annual collage cover]: NO LONGER AVAILABLE

Issue #9, May 1993 [Speed Racer Cover]: "I Have a Beef", Adventures in Lynx

Issue #10, June 1993 [Captain Delirium cover]: Public Domain, Concordant Opposition, Captain Delirium comic, Justin writes!

Issue #11/12, [Justin's Face cover]: SCES '93, more Captain Delirium, Atari Jaguar, Mortal Kombat commentary, one of our best issues ever

Issue #13, September 1993 [Mario All Stars cover]: A beautiful new layout; Death of the Atari Lynx, SF2 review and commentary, another one of our best issues to date

Issue #14 (13 1/3), October 1993 - January 1994 [SF2 vs. Mortal Kombat cover]: Easily our best available issue, featuring a mindblowing wraparound cover by Justin

Issue #15, April 1994 [Chris Dyer original art cover]: Tempest 2000, Rich Wigstone interview, FM Towns Marty, media criticism/commentary

Issue #16, May 1994 [Explosion! cover]: Two essays on the state of the industry by Chris and Jason; easily the best pure writing we've ever done, a must-have issue

MUSIC THAT INSPIRED THIS ISSUE . . .

Alice in Chains "Jar of Flies", R.E.M. "Document" and "Out of Time", Weezer "Weezer", Green Day "Dookie", Nirvana "Roma" bootleg, James "Laid", Elvis Costello "Girls, Girls, Girls", Tori Amos "Little Earthquakes" and "Under the Pink", Counting Crows "August and Everything After", Rollins Band "Weight", The Grays "Ro Sham Bo", Soundgarden "Superunknown", The Afghan Whigs "Gentlemen", Lenny Kravitz MTV Unplugged, The Black Crowes "The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion", and all the tunes on Chicago's New Rock Alternative, Q101.

**THAT WHICH LIES ON THE EDGE OF
YOUR MIND THRIVES IN THE PARADOX**



"PARADOX" IS A PUZZLE. THE KEY TO ASCENSION
IS TO UNLOCK THIS PUZZLE."

—MARCUS TRILOX, ORDER OF HERMES